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Free seeds

Washington

1923

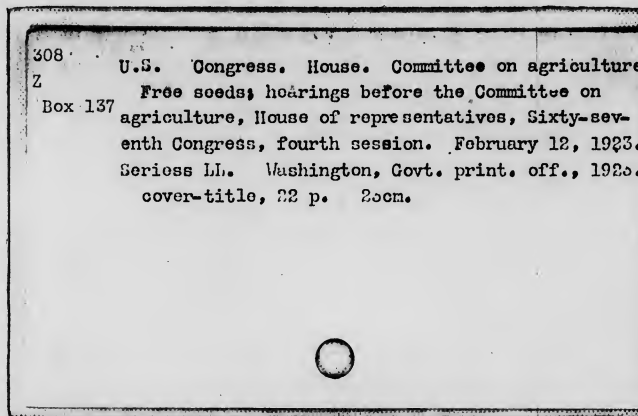
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# FREE SEEDS

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## HEARINGS BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SIXTY-SEVENTH CONGRESS  
FOURTH SESSION

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FEBRUARY 12, 1923

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Series LL



WASHINGTON  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
1923

# COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE.

## HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES.

GILBERT N. HAUGHEN, Iowa, *Chairman*.

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CHARLES B. WARD, New York.  
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JAMES B. ASWELL, Louisiana.  
DAVID H. KINCHELOE, Kentucky.  
MARVIN JONES, Texas.  
PETER G. TEN EYCK, New York.

L. G. HAUGEN, *Clerk*.

# FREE SEEDS.

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE,  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
Monday, February 12, 1923.

The committee this day met, Hon. Gilbert N. Haugen (chairman) presiding. There were present: Mr. Haugen, Mr. Purnell, Mr. Voigt, Mr. Sinclair, Mr. Clague, Mr. Clarke, Mr. Aswell, Mr. Kincheloe, Mr. Jones, and Mr. Ten Eyck. Mr. ASWELL, Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to proceed out of order for two or three minutes [reading]:

"Whereas our friend, John D. Clarke of New York, contributed immeasurably to the happiness of the members of the House Committee on Agriculture on the evening of January 9, 1923, by giving us a delightful and never-to-be-forgotten farm supper; and

"Whereas the food products from his beloved Arbor Hill farm are the finest and best to be found in the land; and

"Whereas his dairy products deserve special mention and the method of his serving them possessed a superabundance of excellent and intricate finesse; and

"Whereas through his loving hospitality the members of the committee are drawn closer together in the ties of friendship: Therefore be it *Resolved*, That the Committee on Agriculture of the House of Representatives hereby expresses to John its profound gratitude—so profound that it is inexpressible; and

"*Resolved further*, That in wisdom and skill in entertaining his fellows and in loving his fellowman, like Abou ben Adhem, he leads all the rest.

"Adopted amid great applause by unanimous vote of the committee, on the 12th day of February, 1923."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I want to ask that, beginning with the chairman, every members of the committee affix his signature with the name of his State to this resolution and that it then be presented to our friend, John Clarke.

Mr. CLARKE, I certainly appreciate it, my good friends. If I have helped a little to lighten the load of any of you, I feel that I have at least accomplished something.

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Langley, the committee will now be pleased to hear from you.

## STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN W. LANGLEY, A REPRESENTATIVE IN CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF KENTUCKY.

Mr. LANGLEY. Mr. Chairman and gentlemen of the committee, I shall detain you but a very short while. I may say at the outset that with the approval of Doctor Taylor, Chief of the Bureau of Plant Industry, three of his experts are here to-day not to make a statement to the committee but to answer any questions the committee may desire to ask them as to overhead charges, cost of seed purchased, or any other detail in connection with this congressional free-seed distribution.

The CHAIRMAN. Are you in favor of the distribution of vegetable seeds?  
Mr. LANGLEY. Yes; and just as much so and for the same reason that I am in favor of the furnishing of seed wheat to western farmers money to help the cotton farmers fight the enemy of cotton—the boll weevil—and various other things of that sort that Congress has been aiding from time to time.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I have not read your bill, Mr. Langley, but is it practically the same as the provision that has heretofore been carried in the agricultural appropriation bill?

Mr. LANGLEY. Yes. Mr. Chairman, I may say that my chief reason in introducing the bill was the fact that we have had from year to year, as most members of this committee know, a controversy as to whether the proposition was in

order. We have conflicting rulings and have spent a great deal of time in discussing the points of order that were raised, and numerous roll calls; and I think enough time and money have been spent in that connection to pay for the cost of the distribution of vegetable seeds for at least a year or two.

Mr. ASWELL. Mr. Langley, you have met in your bill one of the objections I have heard, and that is that some of the members say they do not have enough seed to go around. I notice you have increased the appropriation, which I think is a very wise procedure.

Mr. LANGLEY. I think so; yes. There are quite a number of districts where the allotment under the \$360,000 appropriation is not sufficient to enable them to supply all of those who want seeds sent to them, and I think that is another strong argument in favor of the proposed legislation—the fact that so many people do want them. I may remark incidentally that my observation has been that even though gentlemen who oppose the congressional distribution of garden seeds after it has become a law always want the garden seeds and you can not even get a single package from most of them. They always want them, but they vote against them. I do not mean to criticize anybody who does that but I think we ought to have a general law upon the subject so there will not be any controversy on the question of it being in order in the future.

Mr. PURNELL. This bill, Mr. Langley, as the chairman suggests here, merely authorizes an appropriation for this year which would make them available next year, is that your purpose or is it your purpose to make this permanent legislation?

Mr. LANGLEY. My purpose is to make it permanent legislation.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Then should you not put after the word "that" in the first section the word "hereafter,"

Mr. LANGLEY. Yes; I think so. I introduced this bill rather hastily and simply took the amendment that was defeated by a narrow margin in the Committee of the Whole.

Mr. ASWELL. That would make it more difficult to pass, would it not?

Mr. LANGLEY. No I think not.

Mr. KINCHELOE. If you are going to make it a permanent law, that would be necessary.

Mr. LANGLEY. I think the gentleman is correct in that criticism of my bill. Mr. KINCHELOE. It is not a criticism but a suggestion.

Mr. LANGLEY. I think you are right about it, and of course, any amendment of that kind would be agreeable to me. What I really have in mind is to make it permanent law so as to get rid of these annual controversies and waste of time.

Now, it seems to me that this proposition is on all fours with the practice followed heretofore, and we have followed it this year, of furnishing seed wheat to the farmers of the West and furnishing money to fight the boll weevil and protect the cotton farmers of the South, and so forth. It is all in aid of agriculture; but those provisions are in aid of the large farmer; the men who farm on an extensive scale. This Congressional seed distribution is intended more particularly for the men who farm on a small scale and who work in factories and in coal mines and other industries than farming, and is intended to encourage the cultivation of garden products largely in back yards.

Mr. KINCHELOE. And does it not also encourage the children in the public schools of the various communities to undertake that sort of work?

Mr. LANGLEY. Oh, yes; I have sent them also to superintendents of coal operations in my district and I always send them in bulk to all the schools that are in session at the time for the heads of the schools to distribute to the children with appropriate remarks, and my experience has been that that not only encourages gardening but increases the interest of the people generally in gardening.

Mr. ASWELL. That is about all the country people get from Congress, anyway.

Mr. LANGLEY. That is about all that many of them get, yes. To repeat myself somewhat, this is intended more especially for the gardens in the back yards and around the house rather than for the farmers who are wheat producers or cotton producers, and who operate on a much larger scale.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Mr. Langley, may I ask you this question, although, perhaps, the other gentlemen whom you have here would be more competent to testify about it, but I read an editorial yesterday in a farm journal congratulating Congress on doing away with free distribution of seed, and they

put it principally on the ground that these seeds were not any account when they are sent out.

Mr. LANGLEY. I am glad the gentleman from Kentucky makes that suggestion. As a matter of fact, the methods of testing the virility of these seeds are the very best the Government can adopt, and there is no question whatever about the virility and purity of the seeds distributed by the Government as they are subjected to such tests that any of them that are found deficient in any way are immediately sent back to the bidder, which enables the Government to get the very highest grade of seed, and I think the general effect is to compel the seed producers to raise a higher grade of seed. The general understanding is that the seed trust is opposed to this distribution because it interferes with their business, but, as a matter of fact, it increases to such a degree the general interest in gardening that in the end it increases their markets, if they can only see it in that way.

Mr. JONES. How does the Government procure all these seeds that they distribute?

Mr. LANGLEY. I will be through in just a moment and Professor Oakley and Mr. Jones and Mr. Connor, who are fully cognizant of all those details and much more so than I am, can tell you all you desire to know about that.

The main point I desire to impress upon the committee is that the people in the rural communities and the coal-mining sections and places of that sort and people employed generally in other lines of work are just as anxious to get these seeds as the farmers who devote their time entirely to farming. I recall one instance in my district at Jenkins, Ky., a coal-mining town of about 5,000 or 6,000 population, where a little girl of 12 or 13 years of age got one package of garden seeds from me, containing five small packets. With that one package she produced in their back yard \$20 worth of garden products, based on the price paid in the local stores for such products.

The Scientific American recently had a very interesting article on this subject, which I put in the Congressional Record recently. This article showed that after deducting the cost of flower seeds and other expenses, the balance remaining out of the \$360,000 appropriation, which has been carried for, two years, and which on my motion of two years ago was increased from \$240,000 to that amount, produced \$192,000,000 of garden and farm products.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Mr. Langley, that article is not a very long one and I read it with a great deal of interest. Would you mind inserting that article as a part of your remarks.

Mr. LANGLEY. I will be very glad to do it. It is in the Congressional Record.

Mr. KINCHELOE. It is not long and I think that article should be put in these hearings also.

Mr. LANGLEY. Yes. That is the substance of what I wanted to say to the committee.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent that Mr. Langley be permitted to insert that statement from the Scientific American in his remarks.

The CHAIRMAN. You have that permission, Mr. Langley.

Mr. LANGLEY. The article appeared in the publication and is as follows:

[From the Scientific American, December, 1922.]

MILLIONS IN FOOD FROM FEDERAL FREE SEED—THE STORY OF 240,000 ACRES OF GARDENS AND \$192,000,000 WORTH OF VEGETABLES.

(By George H. Dacy.)

Through his Congressmen, Uncle Sam annually gives away approximately 65,000,000 packages of vegetable and flower seed—the best seeds of their type and variety which are to be had in the world. All the Government free seed is tested for germination and truthness of type before it is disseminated among the amateur and professional gardeners, farmers, and suburbanites here, there, and everywhere throughout the United States. Ever since the inception of Uncle Sam's annual free-seed party commercial dealers and the general public have ridiculed the free Federal seed as cheap, impure, and generally "no account." Despite this, the demands for the free seed have increased. Our Representatives and Senators are swamped with applications for the large franked envelopes, each of which contain five packets of certain combinations of seed. The gardeners have tried out the seed and found it the best they

ever used. They come back for more each season because they know that the only source from which they can obtain such superior seed is the Department of Agriculture.

The hives of the busiest bees look like centers of idleness as compared with the Government seed warehouse during the period from October to April each year when the work of sampling, testing, packeting, enveloping, franking, and mailing the millions of congressional orders for seed is progressing at full speed. It is a well-planned orderly journey that the seed travels, from the gunny sack in which it came from the seed dealer to the franked package in which it is sent out by a Congressman to one of his rural constituents. There is no lost motion. The operations are all standardized and systematized. As far as possible mechanical appliances have been substituted for hand labor. One hundred and fifty girls and women are employed. They operate simple and efficient machines which expedite the rapid transfer of the tested seed from large sacks to small paper packets and finally to the mailing of five packets of the seed in one large franked envelope to the ultimate user.

For many years the Department of Agriculture has been opposed to the congressional seed project, as it is called. The Federal farming experts claim that the \$360,000, which yearly is spent in buying seed and sending it to all sections of the country, could better be expended in securing from foreign countries new and rare seeds and cuttings of plants which appear to be adapted for cultivation under our climatic and soil conditions. But annually Congress overrides the recommendations of the department and adds the free-seed item to the agricultural budget in answer to the hundreds of thousands of letters which pour in from the highlands of Appalachia, the wildernesses of Maine, the deserts of Arizona, the cut-over lands of Wisconsin and Michigan, and where not in the United States. Our Federal lawmakers always reserve five-sixths of the seed for distribution among their constituencies. The remainder is allotted to the Department of Agriculture as an emergency seed supply which may be given to regions where weather conditions have been severe to the extent that their original quotas of free seed did not germinate.

As matters stand at present, each Congressman is entitled to 20,000 packets of vegetable seed and 2,000 packages of flower seed which he can distribute among the gardeners of his district. Needless to say, all the national lawmakers avail themselves to the full limit of their available quotas of seed. In fact, the Department of Agriculture has to keep a very accurate set of books on the seed debits and credits of each Representative or Senator. At the beginning of the annual seed distribution, each Congressman is credited with his just proportion of the Government seed on the books of the Department of Agriculture. Henceforward he is permitted to draw against this quota as if it were a bank account until his allotment of seed is exhausted. The persistence with which Congressmen try to overdraw their accounts indicates the great popularity of the officially inspected and guaranteed garden seed which Uncle Sam gives away.

Banks, merchants, and agricultural clubs the country over which have aided the respective Congressmen in the distribution of their seeds have kept tab on the resultant returns in the way of foodstuffs which emanate from this generosity of the Government. The average of innumerable reports shows that the representative acre of garden planted with Federal free seed yields at least \$800 worth of foodstuffs. A leading bank of Grand Rapids, Mich., reports acre yields of vegetables worth \$1,200 from the free seed gardens under its patronage. Last year more than 240,000 acres were planted with Government seed, which demonstrates a food production worth \$192,000,000. It's a pretty good investment that Uncle Sam makes in his farm and garden seed donations. He spends \$360,000 in buying and distributing the seed and the gardeners grow \$192,000,000 worth of vegetables and truck crops. If any other Government or private philanthropy in the country in a single year can yield a return five hundred and thirty-three and three tenths times as great as the initial investment, the writer would like to know about it. Even under the worst possible conditions, where one-third of each packet of seed was wasted, damaged in transit, or otherwise injured so as to prevent germination, a return of at least \$10 per packet of seed in food products has resulted from the averages compiled from 20 years of accurate records kept by Uncle Sam.

Those who use the Federal seed from Maine to Florida and from California to Pennsylvania by the hundreds of thousands indorse it as much better seed than they are ever able to buy on the local markets. The Government seeds germinate well and grow and produce bumper yields of vegetable crops.

"Government seeds are the only ones on which I can always rely," writes a gardener from Mississippi. A Representative from Texas, who last year personally made a garden and grew vegetables, reports that his Federal seed gave excellent results, germinating well, and being admirably adapted to the climate of the Lone Star State. A school girl from a Corn-Belt State last season raised \$20 worth of fine vegetables from one of the small packets of Government seed. An amateur gardener in Providence, R. I., produced \$50 worth of vegetables from his large envelope of Government seeds. He won a prize offered by the local merchants' association for the best home garden. A couple of old-timers in Hamilton, Ohio, won a \$30 prize from their backyard garden, the superiority of which they attribute to Uncle Sam's faultless seed. Enthusiastic indorsements of the free seed has come in hundreds of letters from Detroit automobile mechanics and cotton-mill employees of the South, as much seed is annually distributed among the working forces of such establishments.

Approximately 30 different combinations of seed have been worked out which are adapted to production in different sections of the country. For example, some of the vegetables which will flourish in Florida will fail in Minnesota. The superintendent of seed distribution studies the orders of each Congressman and makes sure that combinations of seed are sent out which are propitiously adapted to cultivation in the section of the country where the seed are destined for distribution. Naturally, city residents can not plant vegetable seed unless they have back yards. However, most of them can put out window boxes seeded with flower seed. Hence there is a special proviso by which Congressmen can exchange a certain proportion of their vegetable seed for flower seed for distribution in congested city sections.

In addition to being tested for germination, all the Government seeds are tested for truthness of type and name by planting some of them in the gardens of Uncle Sam's big experimental crop farm at Arlington, Va. All seed that does not germinate up to Federal requirements is rejected, while if any dealers provide seed which is not true to name they are blacklisted and boycotted so far as potential national purchases are concerned. Just to illustrate that this factor is one of crucial importance, it is worthy of mention that there are more than 1,600 different types of lettuce, 2,000 different varieties of radishes, and 1,800 different kinds of beans grown and sold commercially throughout the United States. American seedsmen catalogue this number of varieties; and although Uncle Sam does not recognize all of them officially, he has to know them and their aliases in order to determine what sections of the country they are adapted to. It is especially notable that during the last score of years, during which Uncle Sam annually has distributed from 100,000 to 1,500,000 pounds of seeds, the official tests of the Federal free seed have averaged over 80 per cent—a record altogether remarkable. During the past 20 years between 30,000 and 50,000 pounds of Government flower seed have been circulated among the public each year. Opponents of the free seed distribution measure yearly raised a great hullabaloo concerning the large post-office deficit that results from the fact that the free seed is sent out under congressional frank. These contentions are wholly unfounded. Records kept by the Department of Agriculture show that during the last 20 years the average cost of handling the Government seed if it were distributed by a retail seedsmen would have ranged from \$55,000 to \$130,000 a year, with the average about \$110,000. This includes the true cost of postage on the basis of the actual weights of the large and small packages of seed. This would at best be but a small item to the Post Office Department. Furthermore, the system of handling the seed has been so standardized that the labors of the Federal mail service are reduced to a minimum.

The seed packages have to be prepared and circulated on a rush-order, full-pressure schedule. By law it is required that no seed be put into the mails before December 1 and that the distribution of seed by Congressmen be completed by April 1. The Secretary of Agriculture is allowed the special privilege of sending out free seed up to April 15. During a short period of four months—on the basis of current activities—65,000,000 packets of seed placed in 13,000,000 of the large franked envelopes have to be put into the mails. The inception and perfection of mechanical hands to expedite this work have been of immeasurable importance.

The Post Office Department keeps from 5 to 12 clerks at the Government seed warehouse during the mailing season sorting and routing the Government franks—the substitute postage stamps—into the different towns and villages

over the United States. This system eliminates much laborious work in handling the packages of seeds in the official post offices. For example, if Senator N. of Georgia, desires to send 1,000 large packages of seed to political supporters of his in the town of Stark the franks are prepared and v seed by the postal clerks at the seed warehouse. Then they are passed on to the large manila envelopes, which in turn are filled with the desired combination of seed. When the packages are finally counted and placed in the mail bags they are ready to go directly to the mail train which will convey them to their destination. The same number of postal clerks can handle twenty times as many packages in this way as they can of ordinary unassorted commercial packages. An ordinary mail pouch will hold 200 packages of Government seed. It takes 65,000 mail bags to carry the free-seed supply from Washington to the localities where the gardens will be planted.

Gravity is harnessed as much as possible in aiding the big job of packing the seeds in paper envelopes. On the fourth floor of the seed warehouse there are 22 galvanized iron hoppers, each holding about 4 bushels of seed. These feed seed to as many packets and sealing machines on the floor below. Mr. Frank Clark, of Waco, Tex., the contractor in charge of the packing, sealing, and delivery of the seed packages during the current year, has invented a very ingenious sealing machine, which has vastly aided in speeding up the work. Formerly it used to take three girls who worked by hand all day to fill and seal up 16,000 of the small packets. Now two girls working with a machine can fill and seal an average of 30,000 to 35,000 packages in a similar period. The record day's work has been 48,200 packages by two girls who worked at top speed and filled and sealed at the rate of over 100 packages a minute. One of the girls sits in front of a delivery tube provided with a revolving adjustable cup that deposits exactly the same amount of seed into each package. The other girl feeds the packets of seed (ranging in size from 8 to 1,200 to the pound) into the guing and sealing machine. This machine consists of an endless belt provided with a series of cleats spaced to fit the different sized packets. It is operated by electricity. In turn, the packets are slipped into the spaces on the moving belt and carried under an automatic device consisting of a brass wheel which applies glue to the flaps and then under another special contrivance which folds over these flaps and presses them tightly so that the glue adheres and seals the containers. As the belt reaches the end of the machine and begins its downward and backward journey, each packet in turn is delivered to a large basket. When the basket is full, an attendant replaces it with an empty receptacle and dumps the filled container through a chute in the floor to a bin. There are as many different chutes and bins as there are different kinds of seed.

Altogether there are 64 of these V-shaped seed bins, which are large enough to accommodate 500,000 packets of seed. The 14 vegetables include beans, corn, peas, watermelons, cucumbers, squash, parsley, lettuce, onions, radishes, turnips, tomatoes, carrots, and beets. About 30 different combinations of these seeds are sent out. There are 10 different kinds of flower seed, including nasturtiums, sweet peas, petunias, poppies, mignonette, asters, cosmos, and the like.

On the second floor of the seed warehouse there are five large endless belts, each of which is manned by a crew of nine girls. Chutes from the seed bins above distribute the different kinds of seed, respectively, before certain of these girls who feed the small packets of seed into the large envelopes which are carried along the belt. For example, the combination of seed may consist of beans, corn, peas, beets, and lettuce. The franked envelope starts from the tables where girls paste the franks onto the proper envelopes. There it passes on belts to the next post, where the girl puts in a packet of corn. The next girl slips in a packet of peas, the next one beets, and so on, until all five of the required packets of seeds are placed in the envelope. Then it passes before another girl who inspects the package to see that it contains the right kind and number of seed packets. The final operator runs the machine that glues and folds the envelope flap. The large packages are delivered into baskets which are dumped onto tables before inspectors who count and check the packages and deposit them into the mail sacks, whence they go direct to the railroad.

The five conveyor belts handle 125,000 large packages or 625,000 small packets of seed daily. The day's record for any belt is 36,000 packages or 183,000 small packets of seed. The belt operates at a speed which carries 84 of the cleated spaces for the envelopes before each girl a minute. These large belts travel a combined distance of 2,555 miles in packing and preparing the free seed for

distribution. If placed end to end, the 63,000,000 packets of seed distributed during 1922 would cover a distance of 3,551 miles, or about one-seventh of the distance around the world.

And that is the story behind those large envelopes of seeds which come to us in response to our request.

Mr. ASWELL. Which one of these gentlemen do you want us to hear first?

Mr. LANGLEY. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that if any member of the committee desires to ask any questions, Professor Oakley, who is one of the leading officials of the bureau, is present; and also Mr. Connor, and Mr. Jones, and I wish you would interrogate them as to data's. They are all experts, having had ripe experience in the bureau. They are not at liberty to make any statement except in answer to questions.

#### STATEMENT OF MR. R. A. OAKLEY, AGRONOMIST IN CHARGE OF SEED DISTRIBUTION, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Oakley, I would like to ask you how the Government arranges for these seeds and how they test them out, etc.

Mr. OAKLEY. The seeds are not grown for the Government under contract but are bought on the open market from the best stocks of standard varieties.

Mr. JONES. They are bought from seed producers then, are they?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir; from seed producers, and large dealers.

Mr. JONES. Are these seeds tested for use throughout the country in such a way as to determine their value for use in particular sections, or are they just grown generally and used in the different sections regardless of their adaptability to that particular section.

Mr. OAKLEY. You probably know that the vegetable and flower seed industry is pretty well localized. Most of the seed is grown in California, although a considerable quantity is grown in the Pacific Northwest and some in the East.

Mr. ASWELL. Mr. Jones's point is whether they have been tested as to the best place in the United States in which to plant them.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; they are all standard varieties and their range of adaptability is very well known.

Mr. JONES. As Doctor Aswell suggests, what I am driving at is whether you send the same seed to Texas and Kansas, for instance, that you send to Maine and Vermont and New Hampshire.

Mr. OAKLEY. Not the same kinds; no, sir. We have the country divided into zones and different varieties, of course, are sent to the different zones.

Mr. JONES. How many zones have you?

Mr. OAKLEY. I am not quite sure, but I think there are five.

Mr. JONES. And you send out the seed that you think are adapted to those zones?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JONES. Are those zones the full width of the country; that is, are they divided on parallel lines north and south.

Mr. OAKLEY. I can show you a map here that will give you a very clear picture of the zone.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Do you mean that in sending different varieties to different geographical locations that you send a different carrot seed to Texas from what you would send to Massachusetts or Maine.

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir.

Mr. TEN EYCK. That is what you wanted to find out, was it not, Mr. Jones?

Mr. JONES. Yes.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Does the Government inspect the seeds before purchasing out in the fields or do you go out and inspect the plants while they are growing?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir.

Mr. TEN EYCK. You know that there are now some of the farm organizations that are sending their expert representatives into the West to inspect the alfalfa fields and they will only buy alfalfa that is grown in certain localities of the country the seed of which will grow best in the particular locality where they intend to plant it. Do you follow that plan?

Mr. OAKLEY. No; we do not do that because we are dealing with an entirely different set of conditions and entirely different kinds of plants. Alfalfa has varieties that are decidedly limited in their range of adaptation.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Do you not think we have been behind in the selection of all classes of seeds from the standpoint of inspection while growing and in giving



due consideration to where the seed is grown in relation to the locality where the seed is to be planted.

Mr. OAKLEY. I think that point can well be taken up, and there is a bill presented by Mr. Capper covering that to some extent. The department has expressed views on that question at various times. There is no doubt but what there is an increasing demand for certified seeds.

Mr. ASWELL. You do not send velvet beans, for example, to Maine, do you?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir; not if we can help it. That is just the point.

Mr. JONES. But if you are sending radishes or carrots or some variety of seed like that which is a commonly used vegetable, you will send the same kind of seed of that character to every part of the United States, regardless of whether it is the variety that is adaptable to that country or not. You do not make any distinction.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; because the standard varieties we handle are equally well adapted so far as radishes are concerned.

Mr. JONES. With a great many seeds and with a great many plants you need a different variety of that particular seed or plant for one section of the country from what you need in another.

Mr. OAKLEY. Certainly, but that is not so of the radish. It is not refined to that extent.

Mr. TEN EYCK. How is it with cabbage?

Mr. OAKLEY. We do not distribute cabbage seed, by the way. The market conditions very largely determine the varieties that are used.

Mr. KINCHELOE. What seeds do you distribute?

Mr. OAKLEY. We have about 20 kinds, including peas, beans, corn, beet, lettuce, radish, onion, tomatoes, carrot, parsnip, parsley, turnip, and sometimes small lots of cucumber, collard, squash, and endive.

Mr. KINCHELOE. And you send certain kinds of seed to certain parts of the United States where, in your judgment, the land is best suited for such seed.

Mr. OAKLEY. That is the point exactly. We would not send watermelon seed, knowingly, to Maine, for example, because watermelons are not adapted to Maine.

Mr. JONES. But there are certain kinds of watermelons that will grow well in my country and others that will not produce practically at all, and the same thing is true with reference to tomatoes.

Mr. OAKLEY. So far as we distribute watermelons, we handle only the varieties that are generally well adapted throughout the section where watermelons will grow. The same thing is true of tomatoes. We could not think of distributing all the innumerable varieties, but we take, for example, the Stone tomato, which is a good tomato anywhere where tomatoes will grow.

Mr. JONES. But when people are buying seeds in a particular section they will buy the variety of watermelon or tomato that is adapted to that immediate section, whereas if they get them from the Government they have to take the general distribution that goes to all parts of the United States.

Mr. OAKLEY. I think there is a good deal of misinformation and a good deal of misunderstanding with regard to that. The seeds that are put out by the big seed houses or the little seed houses, if you please, are grown to a very large extent in the same fields as the seeds that are put out by the Department of Agriculture.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Is it not a fact now that the people are being fooled on that account, due to the fact that the seed growers are placing the wrong kind of seed of particular varieties in different localities. I am not against issuing seed by the Government if it is a good thing, but the question in my mind is whether or not the Government is taking proper precautions in handling the seed that they distribute in such a way as to get the greatest benefit for the money expended. For instance, take corn, you issue one kind of corn to Florida and another kind in New York.

Mr. OAKLEY. Why, generally speaking, yes.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Generally speaking, but I mean do you actually do that?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes.

Mr. TEN EYCK. What steps do you take to do that?

Mr. OAKLEY. We take the same steps that every seed house takes.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Well, explain that to us.

Mr. OAKLEY. We buy sweet corn, for example, from the sections where sweet-corn seed is produced, principally in Nebraska and Iowa, and in the Corn Belt, and that seed is distributed throughout the sweet corn-growing area of the United States, as is done by seed houses.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Do you not know that out in the West, taking alfalfa again, there is a whole lot of seed raised in the West that is called alfalfa seed that is absolutely a one-year crop when raised in a State like New York or Massachusetts?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; I am quite familiar with the alfalfa-seed situation.

Mr. TEN EYCK. And is it not a fact in relation to corn that certain corn takes longer to ripen than other kinds of corn, and therefore in short-season localities you need a certain variety of corn to grow well there, whereas in a section with a long season like in the South you can grow a different variety.

Mr. OAKLEY. Sweet corn, by and large, is a short season crop anyway; the seed is grown in the North.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Is there not some that requires a longer season?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes. But a short-season crop is preferable because, in the South, where you can grow two crops, you want a quick maturing corn; and in the North, where you can not grow but one crop, you have to have a quick maturing crop.

Mr. TEN EYCK. My experience, which has been all my life, is that for early corn in the North, we grow a very quick maturing corn.

Mr. OAKLEY. Golden Bantam, if you can get it.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Yes. The real, good, big corn that you get later on in the season requires a longer growing season to ripen the bigger ears for which we usually plant the Evergreen variety.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Mr. Ten Eyck, you are now speaking of corn for human consumption.

Mr. TEN EYCK. Yes; that's for human consumption. He has been speaking of sweet corn. Taking corn for animal food, there is some corn that will not ripen at all in my locality.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I imagine Mr. Oakley is speaking altogether of corn for human consumption.

Mr. TEN EYCK. That is what I was talking about when I spoke of the Golden Bantam and Evergreen varieties.

Mr. SINCLAIR. These vegetable seeds that are distributed are for human needs anyway, are they not?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes.

Mr. SINCLAIR. They are not planted for commercial crops.

Mr. OAKLEY. Certainly not.

Mr. TEN EYCK. I presume you distribute alfalfa seed.

Mr. OAKLEY. We do, but that is under a different arrangement and is an entirely different proposition.

Mr. JONES. When you send out carrot seed, for instance, you send the same kind to all parts of the United States?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir; absolutely.

Mr. JONES. And when you send out sweet corn you send the same variety of sweet corn to all part of the United States.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes.

Mr. JONES. And that is true of each of the different varieties of seed. You send, without regard to geographic location or climate, the same variety of seed; in other words, you send on particular variety of seed to all sections.

Mr. OAKLEY. Quite right.

Mr. KINCHELOE. That is, when you send them out at all.

Mr. OAKLEY. When we send them out at all; yes. I think the gentleman understands the case.

Mr. JONES. I understand that in some sections where a certain thing will not grow at all, you do not send the seed, but you do not differentiate, for instance, between the different varieties of sweet corn in sending out sweet corn to the different sections.

Mr. OAKLEY. That brings up the point that it is necessary for us to deal with varieties that are generally adaptable throughout the country.

Mr. JONES. But that still leaves a section, for instance, that has to get a particular variety of special seed compelled to go to the seed distributor or to accept the ones that are generally sent all over the country.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir; but it so happens that those cases are almost, if not quite, nil. You perhaps are not familiar with the fact that there may be, and there probably are, about 2,200 varieties of lettuce. Now, it is absurd to think there are that many varieties of lettuce that have different ranges of adaptation; it is impossible.



Mr. JONES. But taking lettuce, for instance, there will be one variety that will grow much better in one locality than any other variety, and over in another section another variety will grow better.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; that is a matter of type very largely.

Mr. JONES. Is it not very impracticable to do much good in distributing the same kind all over the country?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir; I think you misunderstand the whole proposition. What I am trying to explain is that there are varieties of lettuce that are generally well adapted throughout the country. Now, we confine our distribution to those varieties.

Mr. JONES. I understand that point, but taking a variety that is generally adapted to all sections of the country, there will be a great many sections where that general variety will not be as good as some special variety for that particular section; is not that true?

Mr. OAKLEY. That is true in very few cases. The seedsmen themselves are back of a movement to reduce the number of varieties rather than to increase them. They realize that it is a farce to try to convince the public that there are 2,200 varieties of lettuce. All are grown out in California under the same conditions.

Mr. JONES. Are they not varieties that grow very much better in a dry climate and other varieties that grow much better in a damp climate, and other varieties that grow very much better in sandy soil and others in a black soil, and others in a mixed soil and others that grow better in certain localities, depending on the altitude and the climatic conditions generally?

Do not all those things affect the variety of lettuce that should be grown?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; but there is very little to that.

Mr. JONES. I do not think so.

Mr. SINGLAI. Mr. Oakley, have you not found it to be true that you can grow seeds of any variety, I do not care what it is, in this locality, for instance, that will do pretty well this year but if you continue to grow them in the same locality they will not do so well in other years, whereas if you imported the seed from 200 miles away brought new seed in there would be a decided improvement again.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; that is very generally known. Potatoes are a good example of that. The running out of seed is a well-known phenomenon although not entirely understood; but it is well known that that happens.

Mr. LANGLEY. If the gentleman will pardon me for interrupting, it is also true that some sections of the country are dry one year and wet the next.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; that is true.

Mr. ASWELL. May I interrupt, Mr. Chairman, to give a concrete example. It is my experience that the best vegetable seeds we get in Louisiana come from the Department of Agriculture. I want to give a concrete example of that. Two or three weeks ago I had a letter from a woman who wanted some garden seed and she named nine different things that she wanted. Of course, I could not select them but I sent her six packages, which is the quantity I send all my people when they write and ask for them. She replied thanking me, and said, "I asked for nine and you sent me eight, and I am satisfied. You came within one of what I asked for and needed in my particular section".

I think that is a pretty strong indorsement of the selection of seed sent out, and I find that the people in my district look forward to these seeds with more interest than any other thing in Washington. I send them out on request. When a man or woman writes for a package of seed I send him or her six packages of seed, a yearbook, if I can get one, and a book on the diseases of the horse, if I have one, and a lot of bulletins; and I find that this is the most interesting thing in my district and the most valuable and only thing they get from Washington that is worth while.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Let me ask you this question: There is an impression prevailing, I do not know how general it is throughout the country, and I do not know why it exists, whether it is due to propaganda or otherwise, but there is an impression that a great deal of the seed which the Department of Agriculture sends out is of no account and will not produce anything.

Mr. ASWELL. That is not true.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do you have any complaints to that effect that amount to anything?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir; no bona fide complaints by persons who have actually tested it, and we get thousands of letters of commendation as to the quality of the seed.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I agree with Dr. Aswell, so far as my district is concerned, because everybody I come in contact with states that the seeds sent out by the Agricultural Department are better than any others they can get.

Mr. ASWELL. Everybody who writes me about the seeds mentions the success they had the previous year, and I would like to give you an example about that bunk that they are of no account. Two years ago I had a letter from a prominent farmer saying just what you have stated, that they were of no account. He was a friend of mine who I knew quite well and I sent him 10 packages of seed and told him that I did not know about the seeds and that I wanted him to take these 10 packages and make an honest experiment and see whether they were of any account or not. He wrote me at the end of the year the most flattering and complimentary letter, and I sent it over to the Secretary of Agriculture.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Oakley, may I ask you this question: Have you a list of the different companies from whom the department bought seeds this past fiscal year and the amounts bought from each one?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; I think that information is available. It is usually put up in documentary form.

Mr. TEN EYCK. And also give the specifications under which the seeds were purchased.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE,  
BUREAU OF PLANT INDUSTRY,  
Washington, D. C., June 23, 1922.

GENTLEMEN: Please quote the department on furnishing (1) for immediate delivery out of stocks on hand or (2) for fall delivery of growing stocks, positive delivery, standard varieties of the seeds listed below, in quantities approximately as follows:

VEGETABLE SEED.		FLOWER SEED.	
	Pounds.		Pounds.
Corn, sweet	60,000	Aster	200
Beans, dwarf (hand-picked)	60,000	Antirrhinum	200
Beans, pole (hand-picked)	30,000	Balsam, Camella flowering	400
Peas (hand-picked)	60,000	Calendula	800
Beet	50,000	Candytuft, large flowering	500
Carrot	20,000	Chrysanthemum, annual mixed	300
Collards	2,000	Coreopsis	400
Cucumber	10,000	Cosmos, early flowering	600
Endive	5,000	Delphinium, annual	200
Kale	2,000	Dianthus, single mixed	300
Lettuce	40,000	Dianthus, double mixed	300
Muskmelon	5,000	Eschscholtzia	600
Okra	3,000	Mignonette, large flower	800
Onion	30,000	Nasturtium, dwarf mixed	1,500
Parsley	2,000	Nasturtium, tall mixed	1,500
Parsnip (1922 crop)	10,000	Petunia, single bedding variety	200
Radish	50,000	Poppy, peony flowering	400
Squash, summer	5,000	Poppy, shirley	400
Tomato	8,000	Portulaca	200
Turnip	8,000	Sweet alyssum	200
Watermelon	3,000	Sweet peas, choice mixed	3,000
		Zinnia, choice mixed	600

The following conditions must be strictly complied with, the department reserving the right to reject all bids where these conditions are not met:

(1) Bids should be made for definite quantities of standard varieties, but need not be limited to the exact quantities listed herein, as it may be necessary to increase certain items and decrease others.

(2) Offers will be considered of any standard kind or variety in quantities of not less than 5,000 pounds of beans, corn, or peas; 500 pounds of other vegetable seeds; and 50 pounds of flower seeds.

(3) The locality where grown and the year when grown must be stated.

(4) Definitely state the point of shipment.

(5) Seeds for immediate delivery must be the property of and in actual possession of the bidder. Seeds for fall delivery must be grown by the bidder

\* State whether hand-picked or milled.

or growing under contract for him. No transactions will be conducted except directly with the firm or individual from whom the purchase is made.

(6) Settlement is made on the basis of net weights as received at Washington, D. C.

(7) All bags to be returned to shipper by prepaid freight.

(8) The department reserves the right to reject any seed which on delivery is not of satisfactory viability, purity, and appearance.

(9) Where seeds shipped to Washington are rejected by the department, the freight and drayage charges on such rejected seeds for both the incoming and return shipment are to be paid by the shipper.

(10) The quality and truthness to type of seeds furnished to the department, as determined by the outdoor and greenhouse tests conducted on the trial grounds in Washington, will have an important bearing on future orders placed by the department.

(11) Representative sample of each stock bid on should be sent under separate cover at the time of making the quotations. Samples should be not less than 4 ounces for beans, corn, and peas; 1 ounce for other vegetable seeds; and 1 ounce of flower seeds. They should be plainly addressed to R. A. Oakley, Temporary Building F, Office of Seed Distribution, Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C. Samples of stocks not purchased will be returned if requested at time of bidding.

(12) No special form of bid is required, and blank forms are not furnished by the department. It is requested that your bid be submitted in the form of a letter, referring by date to this inquiry, and stating clearly the conditions under which the offer is made. It is suggested that the following headings be used in listing the various stocks offered:

Quantity. Kind. Variety. Price. Year. Locality. F. O. B. Pt.

(13) In mailing your quotations, kindly use the inclosed envelope, which states the date and hour of opening the bids.

(14) Quotations should reach the department on or before 2 p. m., Tuesday, August 1, 1922. Upon this date all bids will be opened by the department board of awards, and members of the seed trade are cordially invited to be present, either in person or by representatives. The prices on the various items will be read aloud by the chairman of the board, but the quantities quoted upon, and other information submitted by the bidders, will be treated as confidential matter. After the awards have been made, orders will be placed with the successful bidders by telegram, which will be followed by a letter stating the conditions under which the order is placed, also giving the reasons why any other items quoted on were not accepted by the department.

All unsuccessful bidders will be advised by letter why their bids on each item were not accepted, from whom these items were purchased, and the prices paid.

The department reserves the right to reject all bids in whole or in part.

Very truly yours,

R. A. OAKLEY,  
Agronomist in Charge.

Mr. JONES. Yes.

Mr. LANGLEY. May I interrupt a moment, Mr. Chairman?

The CHAIRMAN. Just a moment. In that connection, let us have the number of packages and the cost per package.

Mr. OAKLEY. This list gives the name of the dealer and the price per pound and the number of pounds.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the cost of the five little packages that you sent out?

Mr. OAKLEY. About 3½ cents.

The CHAIRMAN. If you have the exact figures, I wish you would incorporate them in your remarks.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And also indicate the zones and not simply by name.

Mr. OAKLEY. By States?

The CHAIRMAN. Yes; by States or indicate along some lines so that we can all understand.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

# DIVISION OF STATES INTO FIVE SECTIONS.

[Different combinations made for each section.]

Section 1: Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Philippines, Porto Rico, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas.

Section 2: Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah.

Section 3: Delaware, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kansas, Maryland, Missouri, Nebraska, New Jersey, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, West Virginia.

Section 4: Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New York, North Dakota, Rhode Island, South Dakota, Vermont, Wisconsin.

Section 5: Alaska (special), Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming. The CHAIRMAN. You buy the seeds from the same growers that the seed houses buy from?

Mr. OAKLEY. Exactly so.

The CHAIRMAN. And in the same localities?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. And seeds are exactly the same as those sent out by the commercial houses?

Mr. OAKLEY. They are the best commercial seeds of standard varieties. We put them through a germination test before they go out, and they must also be up to a high grade of appearance and purity.

The CHAIRMAN. And they are not sent out unless they are adaptable to all zones?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; absolutely.

Mr. VOIGT. What is the cost to the Government of the 20,000 packages allotted to each Member.

Mr. OAKLEY. Of the seed itself?

Mr. VOIGT. Yes; approximately.

Mr. OAKLEY. I think Mr. Connor has that. Each quota is about \$1,000.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do you mean that is the cost of the seed.

Mr. OAKLEY. No; I am mistaken about that. About \$750.

The CHAIRMAN. Do you mean the cost of the seed itself?

Mr. OAKLEY. That is the cost of the seed put up in packages and put in the hands of the Member.

The CHAIRMAN. That includes the overhead charges and everything?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; the assembling, packing, and mailing.

Mr. KINCHELOE. That is the total cost?

Mr. OAKLEY. That is the total cost.

The CHAIRMAN. Does that include postage? Of course, they are franked out, but what would the postage amount to?

Mr. OAKLEY. Eight cents a pound, according to the regular postal rates.

The CHAIRMAN. Eight cents per what?

Mr. OAKLEY. Per pound.

The CHAIRMAN. How much is there in each package?

Mr. OAKLEY. In all the weight is something over 1,000,000 pounds.

The CHAIRMAN. I mean in each one of these packages containing five small packages of seed.

Mr. OAKLEY. That varies with the particular combination. It is impossible to make a definite statement about that.

The CHAIRMAN. Approximate it.

Mr. OAKLEY. I would have to get those figures for you.

The CHAIRMAN. I have asked the question because it has been stated that the postage would amount to millions of dollars. Now, let us have the exact figures so we may know whether that is true or not.

Mr. OAKLEY. At the regular postal rates.

The CHAIRMAN (interposing). You must have the weight in order to ascertain the cost.

Mr. OAKLEY. We have the weight of the total distribution but not of each individual package.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the approximate weight of each package sent out?

Mr. OAKLEY. We can get that information for you very easily, and I will do that.

(The average weight of each package is, approximately, 1½ ounces.)

Mr. KINCHELOE. Do you mean that the average postage would be 8 cents a pound?

Mr. OAKLEY. We are simply taking the rates that the Post Office Department would charge.

Mr. JONES. That would be correct if they were sent out by the pound; but can you not give us an estimate of the cost of sending them out in the way they are actually sent out?

Mr. OAKLEY. I will have to get that information for you. The total cost is \$106,000, and we can divide that by the number of packages.

(Cost of mailing estimated at approximately three-fourths of a cent a package.)

Mr. JONES. Is that amount of \$106,000 based on pound rates?

Mr. OAKLEY. That is based on pound rates.

Mr. JONES. But there would be a good deal of difference in sending them at pound rates and sending them the way they are actually sent out.

Mr. OAKLEY. That is a matter I think you would have to ask the Post Office Department about. I do not think we are in position to give you a very clear estimate on that.

Mr. ASWELL. Let me ask you this question: Does it actually cost the Post Office Department anything additional simply because these seeds are sent out? How much is the actual additional cost?

Mr. LANGLEY. As a matter of fact, if you will pardon me for interrupting, we know that if this distribution of seeds is discontinued, there will not be the slightest reduction in the post office force or in the Post Office Department in any part of the United States.

Mr. ASWELL. Certainly not. It will not save a penny.

Mr. LANGLEY. Therefore, as a matter of fact, it is not a material matter.

Mr. JONES. You might say that with reference to doing away with any part of the service.

Mr. KINCHELOE. That is pretty near true of any governmental activity.

Mr. FURNELL. Has the department made any calculation to determine the approximate contribution that these seeds make to the general food supply of the country?

Mr. OAKLEY. Mr. Langley, I think, has introduced an estimate in the record of that kind.

Mr. JONES. Do you know whether that estimate is correct or whether it is just somebody's guess? Do you know what it is based upon?

Mr. OAKLEY. I think the writer of that statement has given you basic data that would enable you to make an estimate just as well as I could make one.

Mr. JONES. Do you indorse his conclusions? Have you read the article?

Mr. OAKLEY. I am not prepared to express an opinion on that. I have not gone into it sufficiently.

Mr. JONES. Now, with reference to the question we had up a while ago, what specifications does the Government require with reference to testing this seed and checking over them to see that the companies furnish the proper seeds.

Mr. OAKLEY. They must be first class in purity, appearance, and germination.

Mr. JONES. I understand that, but what tests do you perform to see that they comply with those requirements when they are sent in.

Mr. OAKLEY. First, they are examined to see if they are of good appearance.

Mr. JONES. Do they send them in bulk?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; in bulk.

Mr. JONES. And you package them?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. JONES. Do you test them before you package them?

Mr. OAKLEY. Absolutely; yes.

Mr. JONES. Now, you are going to put in as a part of your remarks a statement showing the different companies you bought from and the amount you bought from each company, and the location of the companies and where they grow the seeds. Can you do that?

Mr. OAKLEY. Well, so far as where each individual company gets the seed, it is not quite possible for us to do that.

Mr. JONES. But you can give the location of the company?

Mr. OAKLEY. We can give the location of the company. Those data you will find for other years in congressional documents. They are not always called for for publication, but when they are we submit the data and they are published, but I do not know for how many years there are available reports.

Mr. JONES. But you can put in with your remarks the names of the companies, the total amount bought from each company, and the location of each company?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

*Vegetable and flower seed purchased for the congressional seed distribution, 1922-23—Total amount paid each firm, fiscal year 1923.*

	Quantity	Price.	Cost.
John H. Allan Seed Co., Sheboygan, Mich., beans.....	6,000	\$0.07	\$420.00
American Seed & Seed Tape Co., Newark, N. J.: Beet.....	1,700	.24	408.00
Radish.....	1,600	.22	352.00
Cereopsis.....	65	.75	48.75
Shirley poppy.....	50	.75	37.50
Total.....			846.25
Barteldes Seed Co., Lawrence, Kans., beet.....	929	.20	185.80
Bertrand Seed Co., San Francisco, Calif.: Beet.....	1,000	.20	200.00
Peas.....	111,431	.049	5,460.11
Total.....			5,660.11
Less adjustments for freight and drayage on rejected seed.....			41.31
Total.....			5,618.80
John Bodger & Sons Co., Los Angeles, Calif.: Cauldus.....	1,014	.50	507.00
Dianthus.....	946	1.30	1,229.80
Mignonette.....	1,678	.50	839.00
Nasturtium.....	3,284	.16	525.44
Lettuce.....	998	.35	349.30
Antirrhinum.....	59	2.75	162.25
Chrysanthemum.....	422	1.00	422.00
Echscholtzia.....	584	.75	438.00
Alyssum.....	115	1.00	115.00
Zinnia.....	1,164	2.00	2,328.00
Zinnia, giant mixed.....	839	2.50	2,097.50
Poppy.....	228	1.00	228.00
Cereopsis.....	724	1.20	868.80
Delphinium, annual.....	50	1.30	65.00
Balsam.....	400	.70	280.00
Total.....			10,453.09
Caleb S. Boggs & Son, Cheswold, Del., tomato.....	12,000	.30	3,600.00
F. W. Boigiano & Co., Washington, D. C., tomato.....	1,050	.27	283.50
California Seed Growers' Association, San Jose, Calif.: Beet.....	2,000	.25	500.00
Lettuce.....	28,005	.35	9,801.75
Total.....			10,301.75
Less adjustments.....			68.60
Total.....			9,532.15
E. B. Clark Seed Co., Milford, Conn.: Corn.....	7,500	.06	450.00
Beans.....	12,000	.07	840.00
Total.....			1,290.00
Less adjustments.....			51.58
Total.....			1,238.42
F. W. Eberle, Albany, N. Y.: Beet.....	24,000	.25	6,000.00
Parsley.....	1,000	.25	250.00
Total.....			6,250.00
C. Herbert Coy Seed Co., Valley, Nebr.: Squash.....	112,400	.20-22	2,300.00
Cucumber.....	400	.20	80.00
Total.....			2,380.00
Ford Seed Co., Ravenna, Ohio: Beet.....	550	.12	66.00
Radish.....	1,700	.15	255.00
Total.....			321.00
Less adjustments.....			7.63
Total.....			313.37

Vegetable and flower seed purchased for the congressional seed distribution.  
1922-23—Total amount paid each firm, fiscal year 1923—Continued.

	Quantity.	Price.	Cost.
Alex. Forbes & Co., Newark, N. J.:			
Carrot.....	1,500	\$0.16	\$240.00
Radish.....	606	.12	72.96
Total.....			312.96
Golden State Seed Co., Coyote, Calif.:			
Lettuce.....	4,116	.31	1,275.96
Sweet peas.....	3,016	.16	482.56
Total.....			1,758.52
Edgar F. Hurff, Swedesboro, N. J., squash.....	840	.26	168.00
Irwin Bros., Rocky Ford, Colo., cucumber.....	2,614	.15½	405.17
S. M. Isbell & Co., Jackson, Miss.:			
Corn.....	5,000	.04½	225.00
Beet.....	1,000	.18	180.00
Total.....			405.00
R. H. James, Rocky Ford, Colo., cucumber.....	5,200	.18-.22	906.00
Johansen-Winslow Co., E. Monte, Calif.:			
Anthrillium.....	50	2.50	125.00
Calendula.....	100	.50	50.00
Candytuft.....	250	.75	187.50
Cosmos.....	600	.60	360.00
Delphinium.....	50	1.00	50.00
Dianthus, Single.....	200	1.10	220.00
Eschscholzia.....	600	.60	360.00
Poppy, Shirley.....	200	1.00	200.00
Sweet Alyssum.....	200	.95	190.00
Zinnia.....	600	1.95	1,170.00
Total.....			2,912.50
Kimberlin Seed Co., San Jose, Calif.:			
Radish.....	4,828	.20	965.60
Sweet Peas.....	3,000	.19	570.00
Total.....			1,535.60
Less adjustments.....			16.11
Total.....			1,519.49
R. C. McGill & Co., San Francisco, Calif., lettuce.....	1,933	.39	753.87
Geo. R. Pedrick & Son, Pedricktown, N. J.:			
Beans.....	5,814	.06½	392.44
Okra.....	1,500	.09	135.00
Tomato.....	5,000	.30	1,500.00
Total.....			2,027.44
Less adjustments.....			14.37
Total.....			2,013.07
Peters-Wheeler Seed Co., Gilroy, Calif., lettuce.....	17,020	.33-.39	5,697.00
Jerome B. Rice Seed Co., Cambridge, N. Y.:			
Beans.....	175,000	.05-.06	9,285.83
Peas.....	80,000	.05½	4,400.00
Beet.....	10,000	.09	900.00
Cucumber.....	5,000	.25	1,250.00
Carrot.....	5,000	.18	900.00
Radish.....	12,000	.18	2,160.00
Total.....			18,845.83
Less adjustments.....			22.15
Total.....			18,823.68
Waldo Rohmert, Gilroy, Calif.:			
Lettuce.....	7,202	.30	2,160.60
Endive.....	4,078	.22½	917.55
Onion.....	4,089	.30	1,226.70
Radish.....	1,626	.22½	365.85
Carrot.....	5,023	.24	1,205.52
Total.....			5,876.22

Vegetable and flower seed purchased for the congressional seed distribution.  
1922-23—Total amount paid each firm, fiscal year 1923—Continued.

	Quantity.	Price.	Cost.
W. H. Robinson, Cairo, Ga., Georgia collard.....	2,000	\$0.14½	\$290.00
Routahn's Co., Arroyo Grande, Calif.:			
Eschscholzia.....	606	.55	333.30
Delphinium.....	200	1.00	200.00
Dianthus.....	140	1.25	175.00
Total.....			708.30
Seattle Seed Co., Seattle, Wash.:			
Carrot.....	6,000	.24	1,440.00
Turnip.....	700	.15	105.00
Total.....			1,545.00
Less adjustments.....			43.18
Total.....			1,501.82
Sherwood Seed Co., San Francisco, Calif., lettuce.....	1,715	.30-.35	564.50
Standard Seed Farms Co., Stockton, Calif.:			
Lettuce.....	4,937	.30	1,481.10
Parsnip.....	1,050	.25	262.50
Onion.....	45,000	.28-.32	13,320.00
Turnip.....	19,249	.18	3,484.82
Carrot.....	20,000	.22-.24	7,600.00
Radish.....	2,500	.22-.23½	782.50
Total.....			29,910.92
Robert C. Stubbins, Chicago, Ill.:			
Aster.....	200	.95	190.00
Balsam.....	422	.25	105.50
Candytuft, hyacinth.....	410	.55	225.50
Candytuft, white.....	200	.35	70.00
Poppy, peony.....	100	.45	45.00
Poppy, carnation.....	600	.45	270.00
Zinnia.....	50	1.25	62.50
Total.....			968.50
Less adjustments.....			6.09
Total.....			962.41
Vaughan's Seed Store, Chicago, Ill., mignonette.....	200	.35	70.00
Wm. A. Ward Seed Co., Sacramento, Calif., onion.....	9,245	.25	2,311.25
Western Seed & Irrigation Co., Fremont, Nebr., corn.....	61,500	.03-.04	1,915.00
Woodruff Seed Co., Seattle, Wash.:			
Beet.....	7,532	.22	1,657.04
Turnip.....	3,280	.14	459.20
Total.....			2,116.24
Less adjustments.....			231.97
Total.....			1,884.27
S. D. Woodruff & Sons, Orange, Conn.:			
Beet.....	30,743	.15	4,611.45
Radish.....	468	.14	65.52
Beans.....	8,265	.07	624.75
Total.....			5,301.72
Wood, Stubbs & Co., Louisville, Ky.:			
Collard.....	900	.17	153.00
Nasturtium.....	1,000	.20	200.00
Total.....			353.00
Less adjustment.....			18.58
Total.....			334.42

## SUMMARY.

Vegetable seeds.....	\$109,435.57
Flower seeds.....	16,101.90
Total.....	125,537.47

FEBRUARY 27, 1923.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Let me ask you a question relative to this article that appeared in the Scientific American, a copy of which Mr. Langley is putting in this hearing. That was written by a man by the name of Dacey.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How long was he in your department?

Mr. OAKLEY. I could not tell you that, Mr. Kincheloe.

Mr. KINCHELOE. He was there some time, was he not?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; he was there some time.

Mr. KINCHELOE. He was there long enough to know the workings of the department.

Mr. OAKLEY. I should say offhand he was there three years.

Mr. KINCHELOE. And he had intimate knowledge of this matter?

Mr. OAKLEY. He had.

Mr. JONES. What is his business now?

Mr. OAKLEY. He is a writer.

Mr. KINCHELOE. He voluntarily quit the Department of Agriculture and went out into private life?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes. I think he is what you might call a free lance in newspaper work.

Mr. KINCHELOE. But you say he was in this particular department at least three years and had intimate knowledge—

Mr. OAKLEY (interposing). I should say he was in the Department of Agriculture for three years. I could not say offhand, but that is easily ascertainable.

Mr. KINCHELOE. How long have you been in the department?

Mr. OAKLEY. Nearly 20 years.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Then you have worked under many Secretaries of Agriculture.

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; four.

Mr. KINCHELOE. From your experience there after 20 years of service under various Secretaries of Agriculture, of both political parties, has there been any difference of opinion so far as you know among those who have had an intimate knowledge of this subject from the Secretaries of Agriculture all the way down, as to whether or not this was a success?

Mr. OAKLEY. I am hardly prepared to answer that question, Mr. Kincheloe.

Mr. ASWELL. What about your particular department? What do you and Mr. Jones think about it?

Mr. OAKLEY. I could not answer that question and I do not think it is just fair to put that question to me, if you will pardon me. Mr. Langley will explain the situation.

Mr. KINCHELOE. Yes; I can see that that perhaps would not be fair.

Mr. OAKLEY. You understand that the Secretary of Agriculture has not asked for an appropriation for this item. Now, I am not here to represent the Secretary in a matter of views as to the value of the seed distribution.

Mr. KINCHELOE. I can also see that there is probably the club of the Budget hanging over them.

Mr. OAKLEY. If I can get you any information on the matter that you would like to have about the distribution of these seeds, I will, of course, be very glad to do that.

Mr. ASWELL. They have the club of the Budget over them.

Mr. KINCHELOE. And I imagine the Secretary of Agriculture is in about as helpless a situation as to that matter as you were in about the question I asked you.

Mr. OAKLEY. I have no knowledge on that subject, of course.

Mr. LANGLEY. I would like to suggest with regard to the purity of these seeds that I own a small farm adjoining Pikeville, Ky., my home town, and I have used a nominal amount of these seeds for a good many years, and never in a single instance have every variety that I have planted failed to come up. Sometimes I did not perhaps carry out my full duty as a farmer and hoe them or cultivate them as much as I should, but they always came up.

If the committee can spare another minute of two, Mr. Oliver F. Jones is here, and he has been in charge of this distribution for many years and if the committee wants to know anything about the correspondence they receive from all over the country as to the varieties selected and the satisfactory results obtained from planting these seeds, and what is done with the rejected seeds, and whether they are ever put on the market by dealers after the Department has rejected them, and the overhead cost and things of that kind, he can answer any questions along that line you may desire to ask him.

# STATEMENT OF MR. OLIVER F. JONES, OF THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.

Mr. LANGLEY. Mr. Jones, what have you to say concerning the correspondence the department receives respecting the satisfactory results derived over the country from the planting of these seeds?

Mr. ASWELL. I have seen a hundred letters myself from my constituents.

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. We get letters every day giving the results obtained from the seed, and out of every 1,000 letters I presume there are two that are not good reports. The balance are first class in every respect. Many of them say that the seed they received from the department was planted alongside the seed that they bought, and that the department's seed came up and the other did not. Some of them even go so far as to ask us if there is not something that can be done to compel the seed men to furnish seeds as good as those that are furnished by the department.

Mr. PURNELL. How do you account for that, in view of the fact that they both come from the same place?

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. I account for it in this way: The department's standard is much higher than that set by the seed men, and we reject annually a great amount of seed and send it back, because it does not come up to our standard of germination or is not true to name.

Mr. LANGLEY. What becomes of it when it is sent back?

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. We do not know what becomes of it, Mr. Langley, but we have our suspicion.

Mr. LANGLEY. What is that suspicion?

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. We do not think it is destroyed after it goes back. You can draw your own conclusion.

Mr. JONES. Mr. Jones, do you get many letters from New Mexico and Arizona and that section out there as to these seeds?

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. Well, not so many.

Mr. CLAGUE. Do you get many from Minnesota?

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. Yes, sir.

Mr. CLAGUE. I want to say now that I think every newspaper in my district is opposed to it and criticizes it. That has been true for 20 years. They think it is a sort of graft.

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. We get wonderful reports from the Garden Club of Minneapolis. They have made a feature of it out there. We have sent thousands and thousands to the Garden Club of the city of Minneapolis, and we get splendid reports. In Detroit we send seeds to the operatives of the automobile plants. Mr. P. H. Kelley always made a feature of that. The automobile people set aside garden space for their employees.

The same thing applies to the cotton mills in the South. We send seeds out all over the South, and they are furnished to the operatives of those mills, and they are furnished plots by the people who employ them. The same thing holds in regard to the miners. We received a letter the other day from a certain Congressman in which he outlined the results obtained with seeds sent out by him last year through the Red Cross. He said they gave them to the miners in his district, and he went on to elaborate the results obtained and the wonderful improvements it has made in the appearance of miners' homes and their surroundings and in the habits of the miners themselves.

Mr. ASWELL. Mr. Clague, would they read your paper very much if you did, not abuse Congress about something?

Mr. CLAGUE. There may be something in that, but I must say I have never had anything but criticism on that score.

Mr. ASWELL. From the farmers themselves?

Mr. CLAGUE. From the farmers.

Mr. ASWELL. What kind of people do you have?

Mr. CLAGUE. We have the very best, but there has been one continual criticism for the past 20 years.

Mr. ASWELL. I have had a varied experience, as Mr. Jones knows. When I first came to Congress 10 years ago I sent everybody on my mailing list a package of seeds. It did not amount to anything. When I went home I sent over the district to find out what results had been obtained, and as a result of my inquiry I adopted this method. I wrote to every postmaster in my district a personal letter, in which I said, "I am going to change my method of distributing garden seeds and I want your cooperation. If you will cooperate with me I will change the method." About 95 per cent of them replied that they would be glad to help.

I then sent a small sack of seed to each postmaster, having already requested him to hand them out where they would be of the most value and to say to any others that wanted seeds to write to me. I reserved the majority of my seed here and sent them out on request, and to everybody who made a request. I sent six packages. I have followed that plan for six years, and my mail to-day is filled with thanks and gratitude. There is no criticism in my district now on the subject of garden seeds.

Mr. LANGLEY. I want to say that I have tried every method of distribution I could devise, through schools, through committeemen, through the newspapers and other ways. In other words, I tried to get the very best distribution possible. And the only criticism I have ever heard in my district with regard to the distribution of these garden seeds was made by a gentleman who was running against me in the primary, and he said that I was sending out cabbage seeds that did not come up.

Mr. ASWELL. Well, you know when your opponent does not have anything else to say about you it is very natural for him to refer to you as a garden-seed Congressman. But that is pure rot.

Mr. LANGLEY. Absolutely.

Mr. CLARKE. I am free to confess that the farmers in my district seem to feel exactly like those in Judge Clague's district up there.

Mr. ASWELL. But your farmers are all dairy farmers.

Mr. LANGLEY. May I ask, Mr. Jones, whether any Congressman ever ask for garden seeds for their personal use?

Mr. OLIVER S. JONES. We furnish seeds every year to one Texas Congressman in particular, and we have had letters from him stating that the seeds were absolutely satisfactory in every respect, and he comes back each year for another lot.

Mr. LANGLEY. That is true in my case also.

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. I also furnish seed to the secretary of a certain Senator who has a plot down here, on the flats.

Mr. ASWELL. I have a plot down there too, and I plant your seeds to some extent.

Mr. LANGLEY. What is the average annual cost of flower seeds? That comes out of the total appropriation of course.

Mr. OLIVER F. JONES. I think Mr. Connor can tell you that better than I can.

Mr. CONNOR. The prime cost is about \$16,000 on the average, I should say. It varies from year to year.

The CHAIRMAN. That is the cost to the Government?

Mr. CONNOR. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. \$16,000 out of an appropriation of how much?

Mr. CONNOR. The total appropriation this year is \$360,000.

The CHAIRMAN. The cost of the seed is \$16,000?

Mr. CONNOR. That is the flower seed.

The CHAIRMAN. What is the total cost of all of it?

Mr. CONNOR. It is rather indefinite for this year as yet, but I should say it would be approximately \$125,000.

Mr. PURNELL. Mr. Jones, do Senators get the same allotment as Members of the House?

Mr. OLIVER S. JONES. Yes, sir.

Mr. PURNELL. They do not get any more?

Mr. OLIVER S. JONES. Just the same.

Mr. LANGLEY. May I ask just one more question of Professor Oakley? Have you had any letters from Members of Congress stating that they have personally tested these seeds and telling of their productiveness, purity, and so on?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes; Mr. Jones has just stated that he has a number of letters of that kind. Mr. Langley. I want to defend the quality of the seeds that are sent out; I am quite anxious to do that, if necessary, and if there are any members here who have personally tested these seeds and found them unsatisfactory I should be very glad if they would let me know.

Mr. LANGLEY. I wonder, Professor Oakley, if any members of the Committee on Agriculture have had occasion to test them.

Mr. OAKLEY. That is a question that I should be very glad to have you ask, as far as I am concerned.

Mr. ASWELL. I have, and I have found them better than any I could buy.

Mr. LANGLEY. There is just one more question that I would like to ask either of these gentlemen who may desire to answer it. How much would these packages, which cost the Government a little over 3 cents, be worth in the open market if he had to purchase them from dealers?

Mr. OAKLEY. Mr. Langley, the price varies somewhat. Some of these packages—you refer to packets, do you not? There are five packets in a package. The package itself costs 3.4 cents, which is about seven-tenths of a cent for each individual packet. Individual packets are selling now for from 5 to 10 cents. Some of them are a little below 5 cents.

Mr. LANGLEY. In other words, the same amount of seed purchased in the open market would cost the farmer from 20 to 35 cents a package, which the Government puts out at 3.4 cents?

Mr. OAKLEY. Yes, sir.

The CHAIRMAN. You say from 20 to 35 cents? That is for the five packets that you put up in one package?

Mr. OAKLEY. That is right.

The CHAIRMAN. The five would retail at from 20 to 35 cents?

Mr. OAKLEY. Well, from 25 to 35 cents. You might find some packets that sell below 5 cents, but the general run of the packets put up by the big commission seed houses sell for 5 cents. Of course, there are a good many now that are selling for 10 cents.

Mr. JONES. Do not those packages that they sell at from 5 to 10 cents contain a great many more seed than these little packets?

Mr. OAKLEY. No, sir; some of them are slightly heavier and some appreciably less.

Mr. LANGLEY. And as to their quality, you have no doubt that the Government tests the character of the seeds?

Mr. OAKLEY. You know my position on that, Mr. Langley. I am absolutely positive that the quality of the standard varieties is high. Of course we do not deal with novelties or special varieties.

Mr. VOIGT. I move that the chairman report favorably Mr. Langley's bill.

Mr. ASWELL. Second the motion.

The CHAIRMAN. How would it do to amend it in this way: "That hereafter there is hereby authorized to be appropriated, out of any money in the Treasury not otherwise appropriated, annually not to exceed the sum of \$500,000," and so forth?

Mr. ASWELL. That is all right.

Mr. VOIGT. I move it be reported that way.

The CHAIRMAN. It is your motion, then, to insert the words "hereafter" after the words "that," in line 3, page 1, and to insert, following line 4, "annually not to exceed"?

Mr. VOIGT. Yes.

(The motion to amend, being duly seconded, was agreed to.)

Mr. JONES. I offer an amendment to strike out the figures "\$500,000" and insert in lieu thereof "\$240,000."

Mr. ASWELL. It would not be worth anything if you cut it down half.

The CHAIRMAN. This leaves it with the Committee on Appropriations to fix the amount, whether it be \$1 or whether it be \$500,000.

Mr. JONES. But they can not go above our limitation.

Mr. VOIGT. I move as an amendment to the amendment the sum of \$360,000.

Mr. ASWELL. The criticism that members have made to me is on the ground that there is not enough to go around. I think it ought to be a maximum of \$500,000.

Mr. VOIGT. I will withdraw my motion to amend.

Mr. PURNELL. I think we ought to have the \$500,000 or nothing.

Mr. JONES. Then I will change my motion and make it \$360,000 instead of \$240,000.

The CHAIRMAN. Without objection, it will be so ordered. The motion is to reduce the amount to \$360,000?

Mr. JONES. Yes. That is the amount we have been carrying, as I understand it.

(The motion to amend, being duly seconded, was agreed to.)

Mr. ASWELL. Mr. Voigt, do you renew your motion?

Mr. CLAGUE. Mr. Chairman, I think we ought to have a quorum and go into executive session.

The CHAIRMAN. The Chair will count. [After counting.] There are eight members present. There is not a quorum present.

Mr. ASWELL. Mr. Chairman, may I inquire briefly about this pending claim that Doctor Cotes has here? Are we going to take any action on it?

The CHAIRMAN. The committee has agreed to hear the representatives of the department. They are not here this morning; I could not send for them, he-



cause I was not certain that they could be heard. Is it agreeable to the committee to invite them?

Mr. ASWELL. I do not care to hear any representative of the department. I think it is a just claim, and I am ready to vote for it now.

Mr. VOIGT. Why do you not make a motion to that effect?

Mr. ASWELL. They say they want a quorum.

(After informal discussion:)

The CHAIRMAN. What is the pleasure of the committee? Shall the Chair invite representatives of the department to appear the next time?

Mr. ASWELL. I do not care; I am ready to vote.

Mr. JONES. I am ready to vote any time.

Mr. ASWELL. I am ready to vote for the Fulmer bill right now if you restore section 3 as it ought to be.

(Thereupon, at 11.45 o'clock a. m., the committee proceeded to the consideration of other business.)



**END OF  
TITLE**